

CONGRATULATIONS TO KRISTIE
THOMAS

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize a distinguished individual from my district who was recently crowned Ms. Wheelchair Texas 2006, Ms. Kristie Thomas. The Ms. Wheelchair Pageant, since its establishment in 1972, has promoted the many talents of our disabled citizens as well needs of the mobility impaired.

Ms. Thomas, a native of Hickory Creek, is the pageant's most recent winner. Born 26 years ago with the condition known of cerebral palsy, she has fought for higher quality patient care as well as greater rights for the disabled. As Ms. Wheelchair Texas, Ms. Thomas will be an important spokeswoman for disabled men and women everywhere.

Besides her crown, she also holds a degree in biomedical engineering from Texas A&M University and has established her own Christian clothing company. She also is a professional writer and hopes one day to become a politician.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great to honor that I recognize Ms. Kristie Thomas for her title of Ms. Wheelchair Texas as well as for her continued service to disabled men and women everywhere. I am honored to represent her in Washington, and I know she serves as an inspiration to us all.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I was granted official leave of absence the week of July 10, 2006. Please let the record reflect, that had I been present, I would have voted "aye" on roll No. 374, final passage of H.R. 9, the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act of 2006.

IN SUPPORT OF THE MEDICARE
HOME INFUSION THERAPY CON-
SOLIDATED COVERAGE ACT

HON. KAY GRANGER

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Ms. GRANGER. Mr. Speaker, last week, I introduced H.R. 5791, the "Medicare Home Infusion Therapy Consolidated Coverage Act of 2006," along with my colleagues, Representatives ENGEL, KUHLMANN, and BALDWIN. This legislation will bring life-saving, cost-effective treatment to Medicare beneficiaries suffering from cancer, serious infections and other conditions that can and should be treated by home infusion therapy. It does so by first consolidating Medicare coverage of home infusion therapy under Part B and then by covering it in a rational and logical manner.

Infusion therapy involves administering medications directly into a patient's bloodstream via a catheter or needle. Infusion therapy is medically necessary for patients with medical conditions that cannot be treated effectively with oral medications. These include infections that are unresponsive to oral antibiotics, cancer and cancer-related pain, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis and more. The infusion therapies needed to treat these diseases involve more than the simple delivery of drugs. Rather, patients receiving home infusion therapy require an array of professional services.

In addition, infusion patients also require specialized equipment and supplies. Even with all of these services and supplies, home infusion therapy is often far more cost-effective than obtaining treatment in a hospital or nursing home. Unfortunately, there are gaps in coverage under Medicare. Consequently, the Medicare program and its beneficiaries are not able to take full advantage of the cost savings and innovations made possible through home infusion therapy.

Current Part B coverage of home infusion therapy is limited to what is covered under the durable medical equipment benefit, where coverage is based on the use of an item of DME (i.e., an infusion pump) for administration and extends only to a few drugs. More infusion drugs are coverable under the Part D outpatient prescription drug benefit, but CMS has determined that it does not have the authority to cover the related services, supplies and equipment under Part D. As a result, most beneficiaries who cannot afford to pay these costs out-of-pocket are forced back into hospitals and nursing homes for their infusion treatments. This is a great inconvenience to patients and creates an added cost to the taxpayers—a cost that could be avoided.

Properly provided, home infusion therapy is a clinically and cost-effective medical treatment for serious diseases. Medicare beneficiaries should not continue to be denied access to these therapies because of definitional and coverage policies that do not reflect the components or the costs of care. Congress can fix this by consolidating coverage for home infusion therapy under Part B, apart from the DME benefit. In doing so, we can ensure that our constituents gain access to these therapies in the most cost-effective and convenient setting—their homes.

Under commercial health plans, home infusion usually is covered as a major medical benefit. We should ensure that Medicare can do the same. Part B is able to accommodate and reimburse for the multi-faceted components of a major medical benefit. My bill allows us to use this existing structure to make home infusion therapy work for Medicare beneficiaries.

Every day that passes without complete Medicare coverage of home infusion therapy is a missed opportunity to bring cost-effective care in to the most convenient setting to beneficiaries. I urge my colleagues to support this critical legislation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to vote on following bills on July 17, 2006:

H.R. 3729, Federal Judiciary Emergency Tolling Act (roll No. 377): Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

H.R. 3496, To amend the National Capital Transportation Act of 1969 to authorize additional Federal contributions for maintaining and improving the transit system of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, and for other purposes (roll No. 376): Had I been present, I would have voted "nay."

H.R. 3085, To amend the National Trails System Act to update the feasibility and suitability study originally prepared for the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail and provide for the inclusion of new trail segments, land components, and campgrounds associated with that trail, and for other purposes (roll No. 375): Had I been present, I would have voted "aye."

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to submit an article on promoting civic responsibility that was brought to my attention by a constituent, Gopal Khanna. Mr. Khanna knows a great deal about civic responsibility, having served as a community and business leader, as well as Chief Financial Officer of the Peace Corps. This article outlines the very significant work being done to promote civic responsibility among immigrants, citizens and institutions in America. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

CHERIAN PUSHES CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY AS
MEDIUM FOR CHANGE

[From the India Abroad, May 19, 2006]

(By Aziz Haniffa)

Dr Joy Cherian has embarked on yet another mission, and discovered another outlet for his social activism.

The man who, 25 years ago, founded the Indian American Forum for Political Education, the first ever Indian American political organization, and went on to become the first Indian American to hold a sub-cabinet level rank position in the US government when he served as Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in the Ronald Reagan and George H W Bush administrations, signaled his latest direction when, last month, he convened a roundtable conference of the Association of Americans for Civic Responsibility.

Following his stint at the EEOC, Cherian had started his own company, J Cherian Consultants, Inc, which blossomed into a highly successful international government and public relations firm based in Washington, DC. A year ago, he wound that company up and founded the AACR, in conjunction with Syracuse University's School of International Affairs.

The conference, at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of International Relations in Washington, DC, touched on topics as varied as 'The American Immigrant Community and US Immigrant Organizations' and 'The

Role of Small and Midsized Enterprises in Promoting Civic Responsibility by Immigrants'.

Panelists included Dr Michael Schneider, director, Maxwell School of International Relations, who is also chairman of AACR's Advisory Committee; Alysia Wilson, Senior Policy Adviser, US Department of Commerce; Tess Scannell, Director, Senior Corps, Corporation for National and Community Services in Washington, DC; Chad Tragakis and Pavlina Majorosova, vice president and account executive respectively of Hill & Knowlton, Washington, DC; Jennifer K Woofert, president, Strategic Sustainability Consulting, Washington, DC; Mahadeva (Matt) Mani, director, Strategic Markets, AT & T, Oakton, Virginia; Joseph Melookaran, member of the President's Advisory Commission on Asian and Pacific Islanders and Dr Piyush C Agrawal, national coordinator, Global Organization of People of Indian Origin.

While acknowledging that there are no rules and regulations or even informal encouragement of civic responsibility in the federal government, Wilson noted that several agencies have taken their own initiatives in this direction.

Wilson said that it is likely the Administration would soon start a program to train 'private and public sector decision-makers in other countries on ethical issues and on how lack of transparency in their own countries impedes growth and progress.'

Agrawal, who kicked off the immigration panel discussion, spoke of the 'socio-political climate' in the United States, 'which for the most part has created an extremely conducive environment for the immigrants to prosper and become whatever they wanted to be,' and argued that in this process the nation has also progressed to be the affluent superpower that it is.

But, he said, 'it must be pointed out that the history of immigration, as well as the assimilation in this country has not been smooth. Every wave of migrants has paid its dues, going through various types of suffering and discrimination, and even the laws enacted in this country of immigrants have not always been fair and equitable despite the claim of liberty and justice for all.'

Agrawal said the oldest immigrant organization, the Association of Indians in America, established in 1967 'when the USA opened its borders for the first time for legal migration from India,' was an exemplar of communities organizing to fight for their rights.

Such organizations, he said, 'usually take their civic responsibility seriously', and by way of example pointed to the activist role played by the community's various bodies following disasters such as 9/11, the tsunami in South Asia, the Gujarat earthquake, and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

'Besides raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for these causes, we continue to serve the daily needs of the poor, the indigent and the downtrodden here in the US through helping out in homeless shelters, food banks, soup kitchens, medical clinics and other civic activities, including but not limited to, voter registration and 'get the vote out' campaigns,' and 'Be Counted' operation for the US Census.'

Melookaran said that small and medium enterprises' (SME) involvement in corporate civic responsibility (CCR) is a vast untapped potential that could dramatically change the face of our communities.

He said that corporate social responsibility or corporate civic responsibility is often built into the strategic planning of big corporate entities. However, 'If you ask a small business owner about his CCR initiatives, you will draw a blank.'

These, he said, was not because such small businesses did nothing in this area, but because big business did not view the work as corporate initiatives, or dignify such efforts by terming them CCRs.

The flip side, he said, was that many SMEs did nothing in terms of CCR, and said such firms needed encouragement and guidance. He suggested that the MCR should serve as a clearinghouse for activities and training of CCR for such businesses.

A significant majority of employees in the US are SMEs, and therefore a broad-based effort to stimulate CCR initiatives among this group could have a tremendous impact, and be the vehicle for change in communities across the country.

Mani expanded on the theme, from his perspective of a diversity initiative that is an integral part of AT&T in its CCR activities, while Majorosova talked about charity and volunteerism from a Central and East European perspective from the experiences she has had.

She distinguished how volunteerism is abused under repressive regimes and compared it to how it finds a sense of purpose in free and civic-minded societies.

Scannell, who was the featured luncheon speaker, emphasized the importance of the pool of baby-boomers 'who will be ready to share their civic responsibilities if the activities are tailored to their skills and tastes.'

Cherian told India Abroad that his philosophy in founding AACR was to 'educate and encourage all individuals and institutions in the United States to advance the public good of all the people by engaging in civic responsibilities such as volunteerism, social involvement and community service.'

He said the mission statement of AACR, which he authored, holds that this civic responsibility, that 'springs from one's ethical and moral obligations, is more than just a 'social responsibility,' because 'civic responsibility' requires all members of all sectors of life in the United States to give back to the country based on their privilege or living, working, learning, or doing business in the United States.

'The essence of democracy is the participation of the very people and entities that benefit from its fruits,' Cherian said, adding that consequently, 'the active performance of civic responsibility is essential for the continuance of the democratic process in the United States.'

To this end, he said, AACR seeks to foster understanding of the concept of civic responsibility among American citizens, non-citizen US residents, institutions of all kinds.

Admitting that critics see the vision as utopian, Cherian said this was no new thought, but the very philosophy that had guided his founding of the IAFPE more than two decades ago.

He carried that same philosophy over to the Asian American Voters Coalition, which he chaired, and later during his tenure as Commissioner of the EEOC.

'This is something I believe is vital for the future generations of Indian Americans, including my children and grandchildren and everyone else who came here and have made America their home,' he said.

'All of our children and grandchildren will benefit if we give back to society,' he said. 'We have only to see some of the incidents and historical antecedents of immigrants, including Indians in various parts of the world when they isolate themselves and don't integrate and become part of the mainstream.'

Cherian said the conference 'will be a sort of historic conference because it's the first conference ever exclusively focused on immigrants and civic responsibility.'

TRIBUTE TO STUDENT RECIPIENTS OF COMCAST FOUNDATION'S LEADERS AND ACHIEVERS SCHOLARSHIP FOR 2006

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. MOORE of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to bring to the attention of the House this year's winners from Kansas' Third Congressional District of the Comcast Foundation's Leaders and Achievers Scholarship for 2006.

This scholarship program recognizes students for their community service, leadership skills, positive attitude and academic achievement. These five students, along with fifteen other Kansas City area student scholarship recipients, will be recognized at an event on July 26 at the Harry S Truman Presidential Museum and Library.

In 2006, this program will grant over \$1.7 million, recognizing 1,728 students attending high schools in Comcast-served communities across the United States. Since its inception in 2000, the program has awarded more than \$5.8 million in scholarships.

Mr. Speaker, I commend the following award winners from my congressional district:

Caitlin M. Powell, of Olathe, attending Olathe North High School; Francis N. Pammatmat, of Olathe, attending Olathe Northwest High School; William C. Cromer, of Olathe, attending Olathe South High School; Heidi D. Golubski, of Olathe, attending St. Thomas Aquinas High School; and Jacqueline Behnen, of Overland Park, attending Olathe East High School.

TRIBUTE TO JOHN DEAN

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 18, 2006

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the House of Representatives to join me in congratulating John Dean as he retires as Police Chief of the Waterford Township Police Department. John will be honored for his lifetime of service at a dinner in Waterford Township Michigan on July 28.

John Dean began his career with the Waterford Township Police Department as a 15-year-old cadet. After serving our country in the Marine Corps Reserve, John joined the Detroit Police Force. In 1975 he joined the Waterford Township Police Department as a Patrol Officer. Over the years he has served as an Undercover Officer, Patrol Sergeant, Detective Sergeant, Youth Liaison Officer, Patrol Lieutenant, and Detective Bureau Commander. He was promoted to Police Chief in 2000.

A graduate of the FBI National Academy, John has received many awards for his consummate police work over the years. They include Officer of the Year, Medal for Bravery, Meritorious Service, Waterford Township Employee of the Year, and the Oakland County NAACP's Presidential Award for implementing the policy to end racial profiling by the police department. His retirement plans are to spend more time with his wife, Andrea, and their three sons.